GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5711
ANSWERED ON:25.04.2001
CREATION OF A LARGER ASIAN GROUPING
GADDE RAMAMOHAN

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the proposal put forward by Malaysian Prime Minster regarding the creation of a larger `Asian Groping`;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government for improving economic relations with Malaysia;

(d) whether India proposes to have greater coordination with Malaysia in multilateral fora; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI U.V. KRISHNAM RAJU)

(a) & (b) While addressing the Asian Society in Hong Kong in October 2000 PM Mahathiradvocated an Asia Monetary Fund and an Asia Association for Development through which Asian countries could interact more closely with each other

(c) Malaysia is India`s largest trading partner in South-east Asia and one of the largest investors in India.The economic relations between India and Malaysia are further strengthened by continuous exchange of ministerial visits, visits of trade delegations and bilateral discussions. We have mechanisms of Joint Commission at Ministerial level andJoint Business Council at trade level to discuss ways and means of promoting economic and commercial relations. A bilateral Trade Agreement was also signed during the last JCM which among other measures of trade promotion also envisages setting up of a Joint Trade Committee to discuss commercial issues at official level on a regular basis;

(d) Yes, Sir;

(e) There is a unique commonality between India and Malaysia on WTO, G-15 andon G-77 issues in general. There are regular consultations between officials of the two countries on these issues. Malaysia is our country coordinator for next three years for our relationship with ASEAN and therefore guides us in our interaction with this regional body. In UN also there is continuous discussion, interaction and exchange of views between the delegations of the two countries.